

COSMOPOLITAN CHRONICLE

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Dancing the Night Away.

Ellen Sweet
Local Historian

In January 1872 an elegant party at the Cosmopolitan Hotel on New Year's night celebrated a new beginning. The hotel was often very festive in December and January. The tradition of dancing, especially the waltz, was introduced in San Diego by Don Juan Bandini when he entertained at his casa. Later, the two-story Cosmopolitan Hotel of Albert Seeley that incorporated Bandini's home was also the scene for dancing. In December 1871 the local newspaper told about Mr. A.L. Seeley's ball where "the floor was just large enough to allow the assembled company to 'do the grand' in first class style."

Judge Benjamin Hayes' twenty year old son John Chauncey Hayes, writing in the *San Diego Union* under a pen name, described a January 6, 1874 ball at the Seeley House. The ball was organized by Mrs. Guadalupe Pico de Gillis and others. Ladies attending included Mrs. Schiller, Mrs. Seeley, Mrs. Mannasse, Mrs. Hoffman and daughter, Mrs. Minter, Mrs. Soledad Tanner de

Marrón, Doña Felipa Osuna de Marrón (in her mid sixties), Mrs. Bush, the Misses Crosthwaite, Miss Serrano, Miss Machado, Miss Smith, Miss Mulholland, Miss Pond, Miss Cota, Miss Curley, Miss Stewart, and several others. Some of the gentlemen attendees were Judge Thomas H. Bush, Don Salvador Estudillo, Don Francisco Estudillo, Prof. Silva, José Argüello, Andrew Cassidy, Angel Smith, Don Ygnacio López, Don Miguel Aguirre, Donaciano Osuna, Marcus Schiller, and Joseph S. Mannasse.

The dance floor was a swirl of blues, blacks, reds, whites, and grays as the dancers performed the waltz and the quadrille. Music was supplied by the Messrs. Jesús Marrón, Ygnacio López, and J. O'Connor. The dance began at half past nine, with dances continuing until midnight. At that time, the revelers proceeded to Rose's Hall for a feast of chicken, duck, lamb, pork, and a variety of desserts. After supper, a special dance was performed by Mrs. Gillis, daughter of Andrés Pico, accompanied by Don Ygnacio López. This was followed by a jig led by Mr. Russell. Dancing then continued until shortly after 5 am.

A couple of weeks after this ball, a Seeley family wedding took place at the Cosmopolitan.

Seeley and his wife Emma (or Emily) had a growing family, including foster daughter, Clara Twist. Clara married Walter Case of Nevada at the Seeley home on January 21, 1874. Another ball was scheduled soon after the happy event.



The invitation shown for a social party for Christmas Eve 1874 at the Cosmopolitan Hotel is a rare surviving example of an Old Town invitation. The hostess was Miss Mary Smith, the daughter of Albert B. Smith and Guadalupe Machado. Although not quite 17 years old, Mary undoubtedly was capable of organizing the Christmas gathering for Old Town families with the help of her widowed mother, sisters, and many cousins. Even today we find that Old Town descendant gatherings have many representatives from the Machado-Smith family.

The Cosmopolitan Hotel, like its predecessor the Casa de Bandini, was a major center of social and community activities. It still serves as a centerpiece for Old Town San Diego.

